

Iowa Joint Operator Certification and Training Coordination Committee

Friday, March 16, 2007 – IAMU Office, Ankeny, Iowa

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jon Martens at 10:07 a.m.

Present were:

• Jane Enfield, IDNR	• Jim McElvogue, IWPCA
• Marty Hoffert, IAWWA	• Steve Mrstik, KCC
• Steve Hopkins, IDNR	• Harris Seidel, IWPCA
• Rhonda Guy, IRWA	• Laurie Sharp, IDNR
• Marty Kunkel, IAMU	• Jill Soenen, IAMU
• Jon Martens, IAWWA	• Jim Utter, IWPCA

Visitors: None

2. Adoption of Agenda

Jim Utter asked to add an item regarding a recent training event organized by HD Supply Waterworks. With that addition, acceptance of the agenda was moved by Marty Hoffert, seconded by Marty Kunkel. Motion carried.

[NOTE: An agenda can be obtained from any Joint Committee member within the three days preceding a meeting of the Joint Committee.]

3. Approval of January 26, 2007 Minutes

Marty Hoffert requested a correction in item 7c, Representative Comments. The Region 5 meeting was held on March 14, not March 24 as stated in the minutes. With that correction, approval of the minutes was moved by Marty Hoffert, seconded by Jill Soenen. Motion carried.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Unfinished Business/Assignments

a. Press Release

Rhonda Guy had not completed this assignment.

b. Operator by Affidavit Subcommittee

A draft subcommittee report had been distributed at the January 26 meeting. The consensus was that this guidance was very well done. It will be distributed again to members of the Joint Operator Certification Committee for final review.

c. Grade A Training Scope Subcommittee

A new chair is needed for this subcommittee.

d. Facilities Classification Subcommittee

Jim Utter reported that the subcommittee had met again March 15. There was further discussion of the problem mentioned previously with very few points being awarded for population size in the ABC system. Also, better balance was needed in certain items between water and wastewater facilities classifications. The subcommittee will meet again in April and anticipates having a draft ready to distribute at the meeting on May 18. It was suggested that classification of facilities according to the point system could be done by field office staff as they made their routine inspection or permit visits on site.

e. Hoffert/McElvogue Amendment

This has received final approval and will go into effect May 2.

f. Water Distribution Amendment

No specific language was presented, but there was a spirited discussion on the pros and cons of increasing the training requirement for WD certification renewal up to the same level as for WT. Those in favor feel that it is simply common sense that the two deserve equal attention. Those on the other side of the issue claim not to be opposed to more training but feel that any such requirement will drive an arbitrary wedge or barrier between WT and WD which are and should remain inseparable.

What was EPA's intent in the 1999 Guidelines? "Separate but equal" was the term used by EPA HQ staff in conversation. Separate and equal might be a gentler translation. EPA was convinced that WD was important and insistent that it should be taken seriously.

Then why did our Iowa program not reflect this after the Rules revision in 2000? Partly because IDNR was scrambling to retain primacy (and was successful in doing so). EPA overlooked this omission then and is not concerned about it now, having much bigger fish to fry with some other certification programs.

g. Numbers of CEUs Being Earned

IDNR staff will wait until after records are complete following the March 31 closure date for this renewal cycle. Preliminary information indicates that a high proportion of operators with Public Water Supply certificates are already earning enough CEUs to meet the proposal of equal training requirement for WT and WD certification.

h. Issuing Agency Agreements

Earlier this week, IDNR staff sent to Joint Committee members and the training community an invitation to a symposium at IDNR on April 27 to discuss this and other related topics.

6. New Business

a. Variance for Sharing a Lead Operator by Two Grade III Facilities. In recent months, the two cities of Ely and Fairfax, fewer than 15 miles apart in Region 1, have worked out a detailed contract for 50:50 sharing of the services of a lead operator. This has been with the active involvement and support of Mike Wade in Field Office 1. As routine practice, the lead operator will spend four hours a day at each facility. He will respond to need or emergency in either of the two. If such a need occurs at both sites at the same time, the lead operator will decide where to go.

This is not Operator by Affidavit which is prohibited by rule in Grade III or IV facilities. It is a contract between the two cities and will require a variance which will be granted. There is no rule in Chapter 81 covering such a variance, but this is something which IDNR should consider in order to formalize this type of arrangement.

b. Training. A training event titled "The WaterPro's Road Shows" presented by HD Supply Waterworks was widely publicized to operators. To quote from the flyer, "This seminar earns 0.5 CEU Water Distribution *or* 0.5 CEU Wastewater! CEUs will be issued from Kirkwood Community College." As originally printed, the program did not qualify for either the WD or WW CEUs promised. After telephone calls from some concerned individuals, two additional speakers were added to bring the program content more nearly in line with the CEUs advertised. Kirkwood staff apologized for the mistakes made in handling the CEU approval for this event.

7. Representative Comments

a. IDNR

Steve Hopkins reported that the confirmation hearing for Rich Leopold, the Governor's appointee for Director of IDNR will be held soon. Some re-organization is always a possibility after a new Director is in place.

On March 15, the Governor also announced four new appointments to the Environmental Protection Commission. They are Ralph Klemme, a LeMars farmer; Dale Cochrane of Fort Dodge; Charlotte Hubbell of Des Moines; and Susan Heathcote, on the staff of the Environmental Council. Their four-year appointments must also be confirmed by the Iowa Senate.

b. IAMU

Jill Soenen reported that Consumer Confidence Report Workshops will be held as follows:

Manchester – April 11	Ankeny – April 19
Coralville – April 12	Mason City – April 25
Atlantic – April 18	Alta – April 26

Cross-connection Control Workshops will be held as listed.

Atlantic – May 9	Manchester – May 18
Ankeny – May 11	Storm Lake – May 23
Coralville – May 17	Mason City – May 24

A Water Distribution Workshop will be held May 2 and 3 on the IAMU campus.

c. IAWWA

Marty Hoffert noted that attendance at the Region 5 water works meeting in Newton was less than usual. Jon Martens reported this was also true of the Region 4 meeting. This year there has been no last-minute rush to earn CEUs before the close of the renewal cycle.

The Children's Water Festival is scheduled for May 10 on the DMACC campus.

d. IRWA

Rhonda Guy noted that attendance at the IRWA Annual Conference in February in Des Moines had a record high attendance.

e. ISU

No representative present.

f. IWPCA

Jim Utter and Jim McElvogue reported that the Region 5 meeting will be held March 28 in Ames. Region 4 will hold its meeting on April 6 in Carson, and Region 6 will hold its meeting on May 9 in Washington.

IWPCA will judge science fairs again this year. Regional events are in Cedar Rapids and Indianola. The state science fair is scheduled for March 30 and 31 in Ames. The junior division (Grades 6, 7, and 8) winner will receive a \$100 cash prize. The high school division winner will receive a \$500 cash prize and be sponsored for the trip to national competition in Phoenix. This is now the highest cash prize for this event in the U.S. Funding for all of this is provided by IWPCA.

g. KCC

Steve Mrstik announced that Kirkwood's Annual Water Conferences will be held in Marquette May 21 and 22 and at Ankeny July 9 and 10. The Bob Black Wastewater Conference will be held in Cedar Rapids August 13 and 14.

8. Assignments

Rhonda Guy – Press release and descriptive article

Jon Martens – Final guidance on Operator by Affidavit

Jim Stricker/Jim Utter – Draft final report on facilities classification

Staff – Report on CEUs earned

Staff – Report on Issuing Agency symposium

9. Next Meeting

Friday, May 18, 2007, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the IAMU office in Ankeny.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Jim McElvogue; seconded by Steve Mrstik; motion carried. The Joint Committee adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Harris F. Seidel, Secretary